

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ISLAMA 04727 140916Z POSS DUPE
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 EA-10 IO-13 OMB-01 AID-05
DRC-01 /091 W
-----100923 141005Z /16-64

O R 120935Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7160
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHERAN
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 4727

S E C O N D C O R R E C T E D C O P Y MRN (4727 VICE 4725)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PK
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH AGHA SHAHI

REF: STATE 118510

1. I MET WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER AGHA SHAHI ON
MAY 12 AT MY REQUEST TO CONVEY ASSESSMENT ON AFGHANISTAN
PROVIDED IN REFTEL. FOREIGN MINISTER SHAHNAWAZ ALSO
SAT IN. I FOLLOWED TEXT CLOSELY AND NOTETAKER TOOK
DETAILED NOTES.

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2. SHAHI TOOK SHARP ISSUE WITH OUR ASSESSMENT ON
GROUNDS THAT IT WAS ONLY TACTICAL AND FAILED TO MENTION
US POLICY RESPONSE TO NEW CHALLENGE POSED TO
PAKISTAN AND CENTO. CHARACTERIZING COUP IN KABUL AS
AN HISTORIC CHANGE IN SOUTH ASIAN SITUATION, SHAHI
ASKED FOR DEFINITION OF US POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN.
HE SAID "WE NO LONGER KNOW WHERE WE STAND WITH YOU.

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT DONE WITH CENTO: SHOULD IT BE ABANDONED OR STRENGTHENED?" SHAHI WENT ON TO DESCRIBE A SHARP CHANGE IN PAKISTANI OPINION SINCE THE KABUL COUP, NOTING THAT THE LEFT HERE HAS BEEN GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY IT AND THAT ITS FORCES WERE COALESCING IN A MANACING WAY. HE DESCRIBED THE INTELLIGENTSIA AND OPINION-MAKERS HERE AS CONVINCED THAT THE BALANCE OF POWER HAD NOW SHIFTED STRONGLY TO THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS NO LONGER WILLING TO TAKE ACTION TO BLOCK SOVIET ADVANCES. ASSERTING THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FOR A REORIENTATION OF PAK POLICY, SHAHI SAID HE DID NOT KNOW HOW POLICYMAKERS WOULD COME OUT.

3. SHAHI ADDED THAT SOVIET PRESSURES IN PAKISTAN ARE INCREASING AS EVIDENCED BY BOLDNESS OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S MENACING REMARKS TO JOURNALISTS (ISLAMABAD 4693). HE COMPLAINED THAT PAKISTAN IS MILITARILY DEFENSELESS, ECONOMICALLY WEAK, THREATENED BY ONE SUPER POWER AND WITHOUT MEANINGFUL SUPPORT FROM THE OTHER ONE. SHAHI SAID, "WHILE YOU WAIT TO SEE HOW THINGS DEVELOP IN AFGHANISTAN, WE WILL BE GONE."

4. SHAHI THEN WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE VIEWS OF THE LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTER TREIKI WHO RETURNED TO ISLAMABAD MAY 11 AFTER SPENDING A DAY IN KABUL.
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TREIKI REPORTEDLY SAID THE GOA IS CLEARLY A COMMUNIST REGIME, STRONGLY HOSTILE TO THE SHAH, AND ANNOYED WITH PAKISTAN FOR DELAYING ITS RECOGNITION. TREIKI ALSO SAID THAT GOA OFFICIALS HAS URGED THAT PAKISTAN

GET OUT OF CENTO -- A POSITION NEVER PREVIOUSLY TAKEN BY AN AFGHAN GOVERNMENT, ACCORDING TO SHAHNAWAZ. TREIKI ALSO REPORTED THAT HE EXPECTED GOA TO FAN ANTI-PAKISTAN SENTIMENT IN BALUCHISTAN AND PUSHTUN.

5. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION REGARDING THE SHAH'S VIEWS, SHAHI, WHO HAD SEEN HIM TWO DAYS BEFORE, REPORTED HIM AS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT KABUL COUP AND AS SHARING GOP FEARS THAT USG WOULD NOT REACT AGAINST SOVIET EXPANSIONISM IN HORN OF AFRICA, ARABIAN PENINSULA AND SOUTH ASIA.

6. I BRACED SHAHI ON HIM GLOOMY VIEW OF US ASSESSMENT, REITERATING PHRASES IN BRIEFING ABOUT THE "UTMOST SERIOUSNESS" OF US CONCERN OVER STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF A SOVIET-DOMINATED AFGHANISTAN, AND NOTED BOTH PRELIMINARY CHARACTER OF OUR ASSESSMENT

AND VALIDITY OF CAUTIOUS APPROACH BOTH WE AND GOP ARE
TAKING TOWARD NEW KABUL REGIME. I SAID IT IS TOO
EARLY, TWO WEEKS AFTER THE COUP, TO EXPECT ANY ACTION
PLAN TO BE FORMULATED, OR FORMULATABLE, PARTICULARLY
IN LIGHT OF THE UNCERTAINTIES THAT STILL EXIST. TO
CRITICIZE THE ASSESSMENT FOR NOT CONTAINING AN ACTION
PLAN IS UNFAIR.

7. COMMENT: AGHA SHAHI'S DOOMSDAY VIEWS ARE NOT NEW
TO US OFFICIALS. WHILE WE HAVE IN THE PAST BELIEVED
THEM TO BE EXAGGERATED AND USED WITH US FOR EFFECT,
THEY NOW REFLECT THE NEW OBJECTIVE REALITY OF A
POTENTIALLY MUCH MORE DANGEROUS NORTHERN NEIGHBOR AND
THE WIDESPREAD GENUINE DEMORALIZATION AND FEAR IN
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PAKISTAN THAT SOVIET PRESSURES WILL OVERWHELM THEM. HUMMEL

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NNN

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